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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Julie Rae Kowald

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EXAMINER

PERUNGA VOOR, SATHYANARAYA V

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2624

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

01/15/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/730,573	Applicant(s) KOWALD, JULIE RAE	
	Examiner SATH V. PERUNGAVOOR	Art Unit 2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 November 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 33,35,36,55,57,58,79,81-83 and 88-90 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 33,35,36,55,57,58,79,81-83 and 88-90 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

[1] A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 10, 2008 has been entered.

Response to Arguments/Amendments

[2] Presented arguments have been fully considered, but are rendered moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

The USPTO "Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility" (Official Gazette notice of 22 November 2005), Annex IV, reads as follows:

Nonfunctional descriptive material that does not constitute a statutory process, machine, manufacture or composition of matter and should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 101. Certain types of descriptive material, such as music, literature, art, photographs and mere arrangements or compilations of facts or data, without any functional interrelationship is not a process, machine, manufacture or composition of matter. USPTO personnel should be prudent in applying the foregoing guidance. Nonfunctional descriptive material may be claimed in combination with other functional descriptive multi-media material on a computer-readable medium to provide the necessary functional and structural interrelationship to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. Sec. 101. The presence of the claimed nonfunctional descriptive material is not necessarily determinative of nonstatutory subject matter. For example, a computer that recognizes a particular grouping of musical notes read from memory and upon recognizing that particular sequence, causes another defined series of notes to be played, defines a functional interrelationship among that data and the computing processes performed when utilizing that data, and as such is statutory because it implements a statutory process.

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MPEP 2106.01 reads as follows (emphasis added):

When nonfunctional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium, in a computer or on an electromagnetic carrier signal, it is not statutory since no requisite functionality is present to satisfy the practical application requirement. Merely claiming nonfunctional descriptive material, i.e., abstract ideas, stored on a computer-readable medium, in a computer, or on an electromagnetic carrier signal, does not make it statutory. See >Diamond v.< Diehr, 450 U.S. *>175,< 185-86, 209 USPQ *>1,< 8 (noting that the claims for an algorithm in Benson were unpatentable as abstract ideas because “[t]he sole practical application of the algorithm was in connection with the programming of a general purpose computer.”). Such a result would exalt form over substance. In re Sarkar, 588 F.2d 1330, 1333, 200 USPQ 132, 137 (CCPA 1978) (“[E]ach invention must be evaluated as claimed; yet semantogenic considerations preclude a determination based solely on words appearing in the claims. In the final analysis under § 101, the claimed invention, as a whole, must be evaluated for what it is.”) (quoted with approval in Abele, 684 F.2d at 907, 214 USPQ at 687). See also In re Johnson, 589 F.2d 1070, 1077, 200 USPQ 199, 206 (CCPA 1978) (“form of the claim is often an exercise in drafting”). Thus, nonstatutory music is not a computer component, and it does not become statutory by merely recording it on a compact disk. Protection for this type of work is provided under the copyright law.

When nonfunctional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium, in a computer or on an electromagnetic carrier signal, it is not statutory and should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101. In addition, USPTO personnel should inquire whether there should be a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103. USPTO personnel should determine whether the claimed nonfunctional descriptive material be given patentable weight. USPTO personnel must consider all claim limitations when determining patentability of an invention over the prior art. In re Gulack, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 403-04 (Fed. Cir. 1983). USPTO personnel may not disregard claim limitations comprised of printed matter. See Gulack, 703 F.2d at 1384, 217 USPQ at 403; see also Diehr, 450 U.S. at 191, 209 USPQ at 10. However, USPTO personnel need not give patentable weight to printed matter absent a new and unobvious functional relationship between the printed matter and the substrate. See ** Lowry, 32 F.3d **>at< 1583-84, 32 USPQ2d **>at< 1035 **; In re Ngai, 367 F.3d 1336, 70 USPQ2d 1862 (Fed. Cir. 2004).

Following is a quotation from MPEP 2106.01.I (emphasis added):

Data structures not claimed as embodied in computer-readable media are descriptive material per se and are not statutory because they are not capable of causing functional change in the computer. See, e.g., Warmerdam, 33 F.3d at 1361, 31 USPQ2d at 1760 (claim to a data structure per se held nonstatutory). Such claimed data structures do not define any structural and functional interrelationships between the data structure and other claimed aspects of the invention which permit the data structure’s functionality to be realized. In contrast, a claimed computer-readable medium encoded with a data structure defines structural and functional interrelationships between the data structure and the computer software and hardware components which permit the data structure’s functionality to be realized, and is thus statutory.

Note:

A “signal” (or equivalent) embodying functional descriptive material is neither a process nor a product (i.e., a tangible “thing”) and therefore does not fall within one of the four statutory classes of § 101. Rather, “signal” is a form of energy, in the absence of any physical structure or tangible material.

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Should the full scope of the claim as properly read in light of the disclosure encompass non-statutory subject matter such as a “signal”, the claim as a whole would be non-statutory. In the case where the specification defines the computer readable medium or memory as statutory tangible products such as a hard drive, ROM, RAM, etc, as well as a non-statutory entity such as a “signal”, “carrier wave”, or “transmission medium”, the examiner suggests amending the claim to include the disclosed tangible computer readable media, while at the same time excluding the intangible media such as signals, carrier waves, etc.

[3] Claims 90, 79 and 81-83 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter as follows. Claims as a whole define a signal (see specification para. 0048, where the computer readable medium includes a signal) and “[a] transitory, propagating signal ... is not a “process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter.” Those four categories define the explicit scope and reach of subject matter patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 101; thus, such a signal cannot be patentable subject matter.” (*In re Petrus A.C.M. Nuijten*; Fed Cir, 2006-1371, 9/20/2007).

[4] Claims 88, 33, 35, 36 and 83 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as not falling within one of the four statutory categories of invention. Supreme Court precedent¹ and recent Federal Circuit decisions² indicate that a statutory “process” under 35 U.S.C. 101 must (1) be tied to another statutory category (such as a particular apparatus), or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or material) to a different state or thing. While the instant claim(s) recite a series of

¹ *Diamond v. Diebr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876).

² *In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2008).

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steps or acts to be performed, the claim(s) neither transform underlying subject matter nor positively tie to another statutory category that accomplishes the claimed method steps, and therefore do not qualify as a statutory process. The claims recite process steps without being tied to an apparatus/system, such as a computer or processor.

[5] Claim 83 is directed to a non-statutory subject matter. The claims appear to be directed toward a processed image, hence is directed nonfunctional descriptive material.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

[6] Claims 33, 35, 36, 55, 57, 58, 79, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89 and 90 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matama [US 6,473,198 B1] in view of Coden et al. ("Coden") [NPL document titled, "Multi-Search of Video Segments Indexed by Time-Aligned Annotations of Video Content"].

Regarding claim 88, Matama discloses the following claim limitations:

A method of processing an input sequence of digital images [*fig. 7*], said method comprising the steps of: classifying each digital image of the sequence (*i.e. close-up*,

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formal portrait, group portrait), wherein said classifying [col. 11, ll. 5-30] comprises: analyzing (*i.e. extracting face*) the digital image for the presence of a human face [col. 11, ll. 5-6]; determining a size of the located face (*i.e. face size*) with respect to a size of the image [col. 11, ll. 5-30]; classifying the digital image according to one of at least three shot types (*i.e. close-up, formal portrait, group portrait*) based on the relative size of the face (*i.e. face size*) with respect to the image [col. 11, ll. 5-30]; and wherein said method further comprises, establishing an editing template (*i.e. processing A, B or C*) for the sequence, the template having edit function components (*i.e. processing A, B or C*) each corresponding to one of the image classifications (*i.e. close-up, formal portrait, group portrait*) [col. 11, ll. 5-30]; and editing the sequence (*i.e. applying processing*) according to the template (*i.e. processing A, B or C*) using the classification of each image (*i.e. close-up, formal portrait, group portrait*) in the input sequence to form an output sequence of digital images [col. 11, ll. 5-30]; wherein each image in the input sequence is edited according to the editing function component (*i.e. processing A, B or C*) corresponding to the classification (*i.e. close-up, formal portrait, group portrait*) of the image [col. 11, ll. 5-30].

Matama does not explicitly disclose the following claim limitations:

Storing the classification of the digital image as metadata associated with the digital image.

However, in the same field of endeavor Coden discloses the deficient claim limitations, as follows:

Storing the classification (*i.e. face size and shot distance*) of the digital image as metadata associated with the digital image [page 3, col. 2, para. 1].

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It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the teachings of Matama with Coden to create a metadata of the classification, the motivation being to enable keyword search [page 3, col. 2, para. 3].

Regarding claim 33, Matama meets the claim limitations, as follows:

A method according to claim 88, wherein said editing step comprises applying at least one edit function component (*i.e. processing A, B or C*) of the template to each image of the input sequence, those ones of the images not satisfying the edit function (*i.e. certain processing is applied only to those that satisfy classification*) being omitted from the output sequence [col. 11, ll. 5-30].

Regarding claim 35, Matama meets the claim limitations, as follows:

A method according to claim 33, wherein the edit function comprises at least one effect for application to the image (*i.e. processing A, B or C*), the effect being selected from the group consisting of visual effects (*i.e. modifying tone and sharpness*) and audible effects [col. 11, ll. 5-30].

Regarding claim 36, Matama meets the claim limitations, as follows:

A method according to claim 35, wherein the visual effects are selected from the group consisting of reproduction speed variation, zooming, blurring, and color variation (*i.e. modifying tone and sharpness*) [col. 11, ll. 5-30].

Regarding claim 83, Matama meets the claim limitations, as follows:

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An edited sequence of images formed through implementation of a series of images according to any one of claims 88, 89 and 90 [*col. 11, ll. 5-30*].

Regarding claims 55, 57, 58, 79, 81, 82, 89 and 90 all claimed limitations are set forth and rejected as per discussion for claims 88, 33, 35 and 36.

Contact Information

[7] Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mr. Sath V. Perungavoor whose telephone number is (571) 272-7455. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Matthew C. Bella whose telephone number is (571) 272-7778, can be reached on Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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Dated: January 14, 2009

/Sath V. Perungavoor/

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